

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8780

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONTEVIDEO 1420

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: SREF, CB, UY

SUBJ: REQUEST FGK ASYLUM FOR CAMBODIANS

REFS: A) STATE 96573, B) MVD 1229; C) STATE 91120

1. ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES SUGGESTED IN REFTEL A WERE DISCUSSED WITH KHMER AMBASSADOR ONG (WHO IS JUST OUT OF HOSPITAL FOLLOWING APPENDECTOMY) WHO EXPRESSED STRONG FEELINGS AGAINST BOTH. HE RE-ITERATED HIS CONVICTION THAT ANY APPROACH TO AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION, REGARDLESS OF SOURCE, WOULD BECOME KNOWN TO THE COMMUNISTS WHO WOULD USE THE INFORMATION TO CONVINCE PHNOM PENH THAT HE WAS ABANDONING HIS COUNTRY. HE IS STILL HOPEFUL THAT A NATIONALIST COALITION GOVERNMENT MIGHT EMERGE IN CAMBODIA, PARTICULARLY IF PEKING SUPPORTS SIHANOUK, AND WANTS TO AVOID PRE-MATURE DEFINITIVE BREAK.

2. ONG SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN VISITED BY AMBASSADOR GIAMBRUNO, URUGUAYAN DELEGATE TO THE UN AND AN OLD FRIEND. GIAMBRUNO RELAYED FROM PRESIDENT BORDABERRY A FURTHER EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY AND AN OFFER TO BE OF ASSISTANCE. ONG STATED TO US THAT GOU WOULD HELP CAMBODIANS WITH TRANSPORTATION TO WHEREVER THEY SETTLE. ONG, LIKE US, WONDERS ABOUT GOU FINANCIAL RESEAEAO BUT HE SAID AM-BASSADOR ROMERO (SEE REFTEL B) HAD IMPLIED HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION DURING HIS VISIT ALSO.

3. EMBASSY HOPES WE ARE NOT REACHING AN IMPASSE IN THIS SITUATION.
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TION WITH CAMBODIANS AFRAID TO CONTACT INTERNATIONAL BODIES AND

DEPARTMENT INSISTING THAT THEY DO SO. CAMBODIANS' FUNDS RAPIDLY BEING DEPLETED AND FREEZING OF THEIR ACCOUNTS IN LOCAL BRANCH OF FNCB, AS INSTRUCTED IN REFTEL C, WOULD PUT THEM IN DIRE STRAIGHTS IMMEDIATELY.

4. GOU IS AWARE OF CAMBODIANS' REQUEST FOR ASYLUM FROM USG. ONG TOLD US ON APRIL 28 THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED SUBJECT OF US ASSISTANCE WITH AMBASSADORS ROMERO AND GIAMBRUNO. CONSEQUENTLY, WE ASSUME THAT THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER BLANCO ALSO ARE AWARE OF THE REQUEST. IF WE ARE NOT FORTHCOMING ON THIS, OUR IMAGE WOULD BE DAMAGED AND THE ISSUE, BEING RELATED, COULD AFFECT OUR EFFORTS HERE RE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES.

5. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW STRONG THE PRESSURES ARE ON THE DEPARTMENT TO AVOID PERMITTING THESE TWO FAMILIES (THE THIRD WISHES TO GO TO THAILAND) TO RELOCATE IN THE U.S. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS TO US THAT OUR INTERESTS, AT LEAST IN URUGUAY, WOULD BE BEST SERVED BY OFFERING THEM REFUGE AND, GIVEN THE REASONS OUTLINED PARA. (1) WHICH SEEM VALED AND PERSUASIVE TO HIM, IT APPARENT AMBASSADOR ONG WILL NOT TAKE STEPS NEEDED TO DEMONSTRATE EXHAUSTION OTHER RESOURCES.

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